



Cuba

1987

Hanoi

1997

Mon amour —

Pour ton journal cubain,
ton univers intérieur au lieu du
cosmos et, je l'espère, un ou
deux poèmes.

Avec toute ma passion
et toute mon affection,

Arlette

le 24 mai 1987

May 28, 1987 CUBA
Thursday 8³⁰ am

Havana

I was about to begin these notes yesterday morning when my phone rang. A Cuban playwright, Freddy Díaz, was in the lobby, assigned to me by the ITI here. A gaunt, rather sly fellow who wanted to know my wishes so that he could attend to them. I returned to my hotel room (# 1231) a little after 1 am, having had a rich + enjoyable day.

I was going to begin yesterday's notes by saying that this diary should begin with the letter I wrote A.S.E. the morning before, i.e. Tuesday morning, in which I recounted my experiences on the flight (Cubana # 481) - delayed by

21 hours - and on arrival in Cuba
The first impressions encounter with the little old
Cuban lady who turned out to be a
famous (+ evidently much celebrated) playwright
+ with Estella Bravo, the American-trained-
Cuban, a documentary film makes me
te a Cuban professor of medicine (she was
just returning from some do on "truth + the
news" at the Ontario Art Gallery which
Bill Morris of the CBC, displaying the
usual standard of Canadian political
acumen, opened by saying something
like: "In Russia there is a newspaper
called 'Pravda', which means 'truth', +
another which is called 'Izvestia' which
means 'news' — + neither of them ever
contain either truth or news." At least,
that's how Estella related the words,
with chagrin.). My letter also made men-
tion of my first impressions - Cuba

20 years takes — the ubiquitous evidence of construction (especially housing), the absence of any sense of violence + threat in the streets at night (I took a long walk the night of my arrival, at first along the sea + then through dimly-lit streets), but also the irritation of the Latin American lack of organization.

On my way to mailing the letters around 11 am Tuesday morning, I met up with Anton Wagner in the lobby. I had been told he had planned to arrive here on Sunday, left on Monday + Tuesday morning no one (at the Can. Embassy or the ITI) knew whether he had (+ they had asked me to look out for him). So there he was, all tanned + beaming, though a little lost. No one had met him at the airport either, + without speaking a word of Spanish

he had found it difficult to discover the hotel in which he was booked (he had assumed it was a cheaper hotel - the Capri, but it turned out to be the Hawana Libre). Anyway, he had a little too much fun on Monday (7 hours), but when I decided to go to the beach, he joined me. I had made contact with one Casor at the ITI who was going to call me back right away to let me know my "program". After not hearing from him for two hours, I decided to write my letters to A. + go to the beach. So Anton + I engaged a taxi which took us to La Playa de Santa María, about 30 km away, for US \$ 8.50.

On the way I chatted with the taxi driver + learnt that he had 5 children, lived in an apartment by the sea for which he pays 10 pesos (approx. \$9.-ns) a month + which he will eventually own.

He told me he has 3 "barones" + 2 girls (one of which is married) between the ages of 10 + 26, who are all going to school or studying, + that they can do so because all education is free; that they don't have to sine-slime or pump or prostitute themselves. He was eloquent, in a simple way, about the new life the Revolution had brought to Cuba — free medicare, free education, equality of men + women, literacy for all, no drugs or prostitution, disappearance of racism. He admitted that there was always a bad egg or two, but he was enthusiastic about what is happening in Cuba because everybody — despite certain material shortages, can enjoy a good life.

Anton + I Spent 3 hours at the beach — a long sandy beach with few people. The ocean was heavenly, reflecting the play of the clouds in many hues of blue + green. The water was warm

+ caressed the skin with velvet gloves. There was a strong wind from the sea which produced enjoyable waves + cooled us down - but, alas, it also deceived us about the intensity of the sun (especially between 1 + 4 pm!), so that yesterday I too realized I had had too much sun, my skin turning red (but not, fortunately, blistering) - Anton felt definitely sick. We had ordered the taxi for 4 pm to pick us up + return us to the city. The drivers, with whom we had become quite friendly on the way out, stopped for us at the "Castillo de Morro" from where one has a fine view of the magnificent bay around which Havana is built. A picture to make the heart take wing! We then made a detour through the old part of the city, along the "Pases del Pueblo", + I realized there is a good deal of the old colonial Havana which is being restored. I plan to spend an afternoon there.

We returned to the Havana Libre about

5 pm. I changed rooms from the 6th to the 12th floor in order to get a little further away from the street noise + to have a better view of the sea. The view from the hotel room is indeed magnificent - the picturesque old city with its palatial domes + spires to the right, the swell + sweep of the bay + the glistening ocean rolled out over the edge of the horizon. Mornings I keep the curtains closed because the room faces northeast + the sun would make life intolerable (air-conditioning being more of a dream than a reality in this hotel), but in the afternoon the sun is on the other side of the building + a strong, fresh breeze blows in from the sea which, with the glass door wide open (or out on the large balcony) makes life ecstasy!

There was time only to effect the room change + to have dinner (a routine

on which I want to comment (later) before Anton + I were off to the Teatro Nacional to see a performance of "Molinos de Viento". In the meantime we had met up with two ITI delegates from Australia (Tom + Alison), + the four of us hired a taxi which took us the 3 km (approx.) to the theatre where I was to be met by a rep. from the Cuban ITI. No one was there to meet me, + it took some effort to locate the president of the Cuban ITI (who claimed he'd been looking for me all day) to get a couple of good seats for Anton + myself.

The play was a delight because it fulfilled so easily + energetically the old (+ still valid) dictum that theater (+ all art) must at one + the same time entertain its audiences + instruct them (though that need not take as didactic a form as it

did in "Molinos de Viento"). The plot involves a High School where all is not as it should be. The director is content with a facade of achievement, but when 3 of the more Cantish boys steal a bunch of exam questions the teachers revolt + the Director is forced into an investigation that slowly works its way through sham + deceit to a realization that everyone is responsible for the moral (+ pedagogic) breakdown at the school, the need for cooperation in a spirit of love + for an unwavering commitment to truth. In Canada such a play would be laughed out of court as propaganda + romantic idealism. It testifies to the health + sanity (+, yes, superiority!) of Cuban Society that such a play, first of all, can be produced with such vitality, flintless fast-paced fluidity + splendid acting +. Secondly that it is received with such wild enthusiasm.

by Cuban audiences. I found it a moving play that poured oil into the flickering flame of hope in my head for a better world to come.

After the 2½ hour non-stop performance, which severely strained my knowledge of Spanish, I enjoyed the 3½ hr walk back to the hotel (without being molested by anyone). I read a little + turned in before 1 am.

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Friday, May 29 - 8 am

At this time of the morning the heat is still bearable. At 10 am, when a group of us are going to the beach at Santa Maria, it'll be broiling, sapping one's energies. Hontana is a sweatbox during the summer months. I haven't been able to get an exact temperature reading. Estimates by Cubans I've asked range between 32° + 37°C . The humidity is high, for this is the rainy season - except that no rain has fallen so far. Here too the evidence for the global changes of climate we are witnessing is not lacking.

I must get back to Wednesday morning when the Cuban ITI finally made contact with me in the form of Freddy Amiles, a playwright in his mid-fifties (I guess), author of a number of

published plays (e.g. "Dos en Dos"). He's a slim person, only slightly shorter than I, with quick dark eyes that are both shag + intelligent. Not a simple personality, I knew at once, before I found out he was married twice + now lives with a woman who has two teen-age children + is, in fact, one of the Cuban organizers of the ITI Congress. Freddy (named after a Cuban disc-jockey his mother liked!) is an introvert who is not adept in the practical aspects of life — e.g. he told me he has never driven a car, + never would, because he lacks any sense of direction or orientation. But he is proving to be an extremely useful guide to me through whom I'm gaining entrance to Cuban theatre, both physically + intellectually, by short-cuts.

On Wednesday morning we discussed what it was I wanted to get out of my Cuban visit, talked about theatres + playrights, + then went to get tickets

at the Hotel Capri. He managed to get me official status at the Theatre Festival Casan "Observers") in order to facilitate entrance to the various events. He also arranged for me to go out with his company to see a performance of a Russian play in a factory in the outskirts of Havana.

Gutierrez picked me up at 2⁴⁰ pm (25 mins late in Cuban style — in that respect Foeddy, as I said to an Australian friend, is "as Cuban as a Rangoon": he is always absolutely on time, by the second!), that is Gutierrez (a member of the company) came to the hotel + we took a tourist taxi which brought us to the Empresa Plásticos Habana (a plastics factory near the port) through the industrial area of the city which seems to be concentrated near the port. There were many merchant ships in the harbor + Gutierrez told me, in response to questions, that the US blockade

is no longer as effective as it was (though Freddy told me) ~~that~~ that the U. S. still use every means to sabotage Cuban trade: they put pressure on foreign companies + governments to cancel contracts they have made to sell Cuba vital materials for building or machines for agriculture, etc.). There were small red flags stuck in the ground along the driveway to the "theatre" which turned out to be essentially a large cafeteria style room, just as shabby as you might find them in a Canadian factory. There they had set up a long table + chairs, as though for a committee meeting, one short end with its back to a green wall, + around this "set" on three sides, with barely four feet of space were rows of chairs for the spectators.

As the performance didn't start 'till 3:30 pm I had a chat with the actors outside who told me they were all on salary + very happy with the work they were

setting. They also readily agreed with me that such security was a threat to their dynamics as actors, though I wasn't promoting an jungle (!) + they explained that their dynamics came from their contact with the audience. And I saw that contact in action!

The play was "El Poemio" by the Soviet writer A. Grelman. And it was a Committee meeting — of the Party, concerning complaints of the workers of mismanagement + corruption in the running of a factory. The bone of contention was the premium to be paid for fulfilment of the quota which, the foreman argued, the workers had deserved because they had done better than their quota. He produced statistical evidence that the problems + snags were the consequence of incompetence on the part of the administrators. The play is a heated (in more ways than one) argument during which every point of view is heard + which is finally settled in favour of the workers by the tie-breaking

note of one of the managers whose original antagonism to the foreman is gradually changed + turned around. Throughout this two-hour, non-stop debate, the factory workers (who filled the room) were so integrated with the action that they lost the sense of this being theatre: this was their situation that was being debated, + their pride + their income that was at stake. They laughed + cursed, + since the performance was without special costumes + artificial lights, in a hall with windows open (at one point a train passed + whistled so loud + long that the actors had to stop talking) so that street noises were heard throughout, + people were coming + going in the background, I too became unsure that this wasn't a "real" committee meeting. All of the circumstances were diametrically opposed to the Tongleis theatre to which I am accustomed, + yet it worked! I'll never forget the kitchen workers (there was a

kitchen at one end of the room) using every opportunity in between working, to stand in the doorway + watch the performance with rapt attention. The audience was absorbed from beginning to end + gave the actors a standing ovation. It is occasions like this that make me realize how profoundly changed this Society is, + whatever the drawbacks of Cuban Socialism are, it is a change for the better for the majority of Cubans.

X

Saturday, May 30 — 8^{am}

Events are definitely getting ahead of me. I'm going to have to shorten these notes, because I'm already 3 days behind — one more day + the point is lost, i.e. to register immediate impressions.

I forgot to mention a brief luncheon at "La Torre", a Restaurant at the top of the highest building in Havana (just close to the hotel) to which Bill Sinclair, the Cultural Attaché of the Can. Embassy treated Anton + I. Alas, Anton was so poorly (from the sun, he thought) that he ate little, but I enjoyed a plate of camarones + an ensalada mixta. Bill is a jolly person, a little heavily built, but full of enthusiasm for the arts. We had a lively discussion + I gleaned some information from his 8 months in Cuba. But time was short since I had agreed to

to meet Guillermo at the hotel to go to
see "El Premio".

In the evening I went to see an
anniversary production of Maria Antonia
by Eugenio H. Espinosa. An interesting play
whose "Carmen" plot was intertwined with
the mystical - superstitious beliefs + practices of the
past of certain African people of this island.
(Actually the Yoruba (?) people, the language of
Wole Soyinka whose works have just been
published in Spanish + who came to launch
his book with a speech at 6 pm on
Thursday) The mythic dimension is what
makes this play come alive, + the director
had wisely emphasized these elements in
the set + in the impressive choreography of
several dances + chants. The foreground plot
of the passionate cantiful negroess who poisons
her boxes lover for infidelity + is then stabbed
to death by another lover for the same
reason, is thin, + it wasn't helped by

the fact that the parts were played by the same actors who played them in the premiere production 20 years ago. Two decades tend to soften the contours of passion — to say nothing of the contours of bodies, in this case particularly that of the leading actress who had at least one superfluous pound of flesh to show for every year that had passed since the original production. The theatre is not the place for homage productions. —

Thursday began as usual with notes, picking up tickets at the Capri. At 10am Freddy picked me up for a tour of Old Havana. I didn't realize so much of Colonial Havana had survived, + the Cubans are extremely busy trying to restore some of it. Many buildings are already in fine shape, reflecting the wealth of those days. There are cobbled streets, lovely patios, balconies (in stone + iron), + charming

plazas — like the Plaza de Armas where Cuba's publishers have a fine building of colonial splendor. Alas, all the museums were closed until 2³⁰ pm + by then we were back at the hotel. But I want to remember two trees which I learnt are peculiar to Cuba — the palma real, the Royal palm, a very tall (60 - 100 ft?) palm with a completely smooth bark that barely shows the sections of growth + a graceful, thickening in the middle that tapers off in both directions like an Arabic column; + the wide-branched Seiba tree, for which Freddy knew no English term, a fine specimen of which represents a third generation outside the Templo de la Catedral, the place where the first Catholic Mass was read by the Spaniards. We walked along the water so that I could get a clear visual impression of the splendid (+ very busy) harbor which extends into the island in the shape of a

bagpipe — a large sack connected to the sea by a long + narrow neck guarded on each side by heavy fortifications (el Castillo del Morro on one side, el Castillo de la Punta on the other).

At 4 pm we walked to the Casa de las Americas. I should say that walking is extremely strenuous in these temperatures + in this humidity, + Freddy sweats as profusely as I do. How he manages to cope with the strong (small) cups of coffee which he needs at regular intervals I don't know. I restrict myself to water — or the occasional mojito, a rum-drink with a sprig of some mint like herb in it. Had one during the morning walk in the Bodeguita where Hemingway used to drink it. By the way, the Cubans indulge a perfectly lazy Hemingway cult. I have heard + seen his name a hundred times to sell certain drinks

+ bars (in particular "El Floridita"). I am disappointed that they should stoop to such banal tourist promotion. Even the taxi driver told me of his 92-year old friend, a fisherman who used to take Hemingway out + who inspired "The Old Man + the Sea". — The visit to the Casa de las Americas was movement since the Theatre Festival people were in session + someone was holding forth about Uruguay. I caught up with Isidora Aguirre who apologized profusely for not having called back the meet with me. She is beset with people + old friends, + we agreed to get together in Montreal.

At 6 pm we went to attend Sigmakai's book launching. He is an intelligent person who handles himself well under questioning. Understandably he has a high opinion of African traditions, + an extremely sceptical one of those of the former white colonial masters. I must

make a point of reading his plays carefully to see if I can get access to these African traditions. I must not allow myself to be put off by his vanity or his tendency to pontificate. The public makes it extremely difficult to wear the Nobel laurels with grace.

At 9 pm Freddy + I went to see a play at the "Teatro Nacional" - "El Gato de Clímax ..." - not a play as much as a romp about the anomalies + mismanagements in a Socialist sugar factory. The audience enjoyed themselves largely, but it was shallow + silly, + after a 1/2 hr I lost interest. Freddy felt the same way. So we left at intermission. I caught a Congress bus back to the hotel + managed, for once, to get to bed (but not to sleep) before midnight.

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Saturday 11am

I am back from the Palacio de los
Conveniones where I went to register.
I missed the bus, but got a lift from
Ricardo Garal who had Ignacio Entínez in
the car. Ricardo is the director of the puppet
theater where I saw El Caballito Lloradito
yesterday which Ignacio had rewritten from
a Russian original by P. Tchekov. I liked the
production a lot. It combined shadow puppets
with rod puppets + was well-paced + imaginatively
designed. Simple means were used to good
effect — for instance, three strips of some
white, semitransparent material, were raised
+ lowered horizontally to give a plastic
sensation of a sea in motion (on
which a whale was rocked). But I thought
the play patronized children by stripping
the story to the barest minimum necessary
to tell of the adventures of the little boy.
Symbolical figures appear like the princess

of the Moon), but this essential relation to the story is left in limbo — so that one feels if they'd been something else (i.e. if the princess had instead been a prince from Mars) it would make little difference. Agnieszka confessed to (over-)simplifying the story + said how difficult it was to write a play to appeal to children of different ages. =
Freddy is downstairs in the lobby + we're off on another day's adventures. =

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Ps. I mentioned Mask as an example of such a play. It was only then that they learnt I was the author of Mask — whereupon they virtually exploded with enthusiasm + admiration, pumping my hand ecstatically. I had no idea they even knew the play. Now I learnt they had already translated it from the French translation! They are planning a production + we're to meet about it tomorrow. *

Sunday, May 31, 9 am

The Congress begins tonight + casts its shadow well ahead. I was at breakfast just after 7 am (the time the restaurant opens), but as I was leaving David Levine from N.Y. came + engaged me in an informational session. He has a curious status with the Playwrights Committee. Since we have neither the right nor any need to appoint a "legal advisor" he owes the position more to the neoplastic machinations of certain Committee members (Hain, Heller + Sito) than to any real contribution he has made to the Work of the Committee. — David is a "nice" chap, but his attitudes are those of the wealthy Jewish New York lawyers which he is, + we were into a fight quickly when he pointed out how different Cuba was under Batista, being much more splendid this (Havana) hotel was, + the streets in good repair, + goods in the shops. I put him in his place

by pointing out that many of these flaws were not to be laid at the doorstep of Socialism but of the capitalism of his country which has done everything to break Cuba economically. "What else do you expect us to do?" he replied. "They're the enemy." To which I replied that Cubans were not the enemy of Americans, but only of the privileged + the exploiters who are responsible for so much suffering in South America. In any case, the facade of Socialism may be in need of repair - I agreed - but the reality is that the NS has much more illiteracy, ill health + poverty, even relatively speaking, than Cuba. - Anyway I didn't get away till 9 am + at 10 am I have meeting with Ex Com. So I must rush these notes.

Back to Friday. I already recorded my impressions of "El Caballito Jacobadito", the puppet play I went to see at 3 pm. In

the morning I went to the beach with Alysson Lyssa (Australia) + Joene Lyte (DDR), an older lady who was effusively grateful that we took her. We only stayed a couple of hours + I was protected by Alysson's 12 + Sun tan lotion. Gorgeous weather - even more gorgeous waters. We were beset by Cubans who wanted to practice their English (so they said), but managed to talk amongst ourselves too, exchanging experiences + views on Cuba + Socialism.

Someday A. asked if I had ever written a book in German, + when I mentioned CANADA, some people near us (I thought they were just toasting themselves) got up to congratulate me on the book. They were Austrians who had read it + thought it excellent. Writing in Canada may be like throwing balloons into a snow bank, but they seem to pass through - as though a black hole - + come out the other side into the rest

of the world + at least be taken note of. -

In the evening Freddy took me to see (at my suggestion : F. thinks I have ESP because whenever I choose something it's good + when he does it's poor — the last of the show, I say!) El Millonario la Maleta in the Casa de la Comedia, a small open-air theatre in Havana Vieja. What a delightful experience! A total impromptu comedy of errors, written by a 19th century Cuban woman who spent most of her time in Spain — Lettadis Avellaneda — and performed with abandon in a laughing Caribbean night! A well-paced farce. I'm going to try + get a copy of it to see if it can be translated. What was also wonderful to see was the neighborhood kids (under ten) who apparently came night after night, spellbound by the magic of the theatre unfolding before their eyes. Occasionally one of them runs across the set

(an open space in a patio surrounded by the audience on folding chairs). It was a liberating experience after all that Socialist drama I've seen!

Yesterday was registration time at the Palacio de Convenciones where I was taken by Ricardo G. + Ignacio G. (see yesterday's notes). Afterwards we ^(F.+J) went to Freddy's place in the centre of Old Havana where he gave me a short course on contemporary Cuban drama. He lives with his common-law wife + his two teenage children in a second-floor apartment consisting of 4 or five narrow (but high-ceilinged) rooms with a tiny spare for him to work. He is evidently quite content with his quarters (which he owns + therefore doesn't cost him anything); they are too dingy + noisy for me but they're better than what I've seen in other Latin American countries.

Freddy told me about the six most important contemporary playwrights (including himself) + at my request because he is a modest man): Abelardo Estornino, Nicolás Doce, Héctor Quintos, Ignacio Gutiérrez + José Boene. He outlined their plays to me + I've chosen seven I want to read + from which I shall select one or two for translations. The plays are a compromise between what Freddy judges as their best work + what I judge instinctively might interest a Canadian audience. They include "El Robo de Percey", "Ni un Si, ni un No", "Las Pericas", "Contigo pan y cebolla", "Veníame a la Pelota", "Santa Comedia de la Habana Vieja", "Adriana en dos Tiempos", + "El Esquema". After I've read them I'll know better. It was certainly a very informative + fruitful session.

From F's apartment we went to the art museum. A large modern cement building

that seemed to be in some disarray + even disrepair. But, after walking up a long ramp, we came to a large room marked "Art Cuban" which contained approx. 80-100 canvases of the 19th + 20th century. Apart from Lam (who spent most of his life in Paris but died in his native Cuba in 1982) I know none of the painters. There was some very interesting work, but so few canvases by any one painter that it was impossible to judge their importance or even discern a distinctive Cuban style. European influences were significant, but there were independent spirits too. I tried in vain to buy postcards or reproductions or to find a book about Cuban art.

There was time for a rest at the hotel before dinner + another theatre performance this time of the "Danza Nacional de Cuba".

The food in the hotel is plentiful + good, but not very sophisticated. Perhaps I am spoiled by the home cooking of my Cordon Bleu sweetheart. Still, I am adaptable + I would find no fault with the food. The Cubans are to be especially congratulated considering the difficulties they themselves have with the food supply.

Breakfast is between 7 + 10 am + offers large quantities of fresh fruit (oranges, grapefruit, pineapples, mangos + bananas), boiled eggs or scrambled eggs with bacon or (sometimes pancakes). In addition there is a long table with plates of cheese or sausage as well as different sweets + cakes. Orange + quark juice, American or Cuban coffee, yogurt etc. I usually eat a large three-course breakfast because I skip lunch altogether (except for the luncheon with Jill Sinclair). - Dinner offers the same variety of food + drinks (a bottle of water or beer is included), but a larger selection of sweet cakes. There are also large numbers of

hours d'cañadas which include tomatoes + cucumbers, various pastas + crackers, fried bananas + plantains, frequently an assortment of pieces of fish, cheese or meat. In addition there is a hot meal, ^{usually} ~~one~~ choice of fried fish or chicken, a meat stew, once rabbit + once calamores — with either rice or potatoes + sometimes beans. As I say, plentiful + solid.

At 8:15 pm Freddy picked me up at the hotel + we went to the National Ballet Theatre to see the company "Danza Nacional de Cuba" in a programme of 5 pieces of which the first, which lasted almost a whole hour, was by far the best:

"Lunetario" ("Stalls") in which four characters sit next to each other watching a show while the dancers interpret their different interior monologues. A fascinating piece with superb group dancing + a fine choreography. I liked the group very much — young, modern, inspired, though I didn't care much for the pieces they called "Jeminal" (an unfocussed piece about plants +

flowers growing) + Mandala (about Nelson M. of course) because the choreography made no sense. "Tintano" paid tribute to Caribbean music + traditions, but I found it an unnecessary descent into the commonplace. "Metamorphosis" was excellent: it didn't have anything to do with Kafka (inspite of the quote in the program), but depicted the struggle of life towards freedom + light. There was an air of biological mysticism as well as political liberations. A thoroughly enjoyable evening that convinced Freddy that my intuition (I had chosen the program from a long list of available spectacles).

Afterwards we went to La Floridita, Hemingway's favorite bar to have one of his beloved daiquiris. I found it no better than any daiquiri I've had elsewhere, but I dislike such personality cults for commercial profit + would react against it even if La Floridita offered the best daiquiri in the world. — By 1 am I was back at the hotel + watched a film with William Holden till 2 am.

Tuesday 11 am

June 2

Since the start of the Congress Monday morning it's been impossible to get back to these notes. In fact, for me the Congress started on Sunday morning when the ITI EXCOM asked to see the Presidents of the Permanent Committees. The meeting was in a building in Old Hankra + we were asked to wait as each of us was to appear before EXCOM in turn. I was annoyed by this high-handed attitude + began my appearance by calling EXCOM "arrogant". Sengar apologized + tried to apologize the procedure to transportation difficulties. But I pointed out that we were all artists of the theatre inter pares + that all the presidents should meet with EXCOM at the same time so that they could hear what each one has to say.

about Committee structures + rationales, instead of being treated like suspects appearing at a hearing to see if a crime has been committed. But they didn't budge + I lambasted them for their concentration minds. Later several members of Excom (Poland, FRG, India, etc.) congratulated me on my outspokenness. They agreed with my position, but declared there was no point in this protesting because Peimetti was a dictator. Cowards! In the end, they're putting their own vested interest ahead of the common good.

I'm not going to bother making a note about the details of the Congress because the administrative portion is a bore: I can deal with it effectively, but it doesn't exactly inspire me. I'm a very practical person + impatient with obfuscation + circumlocution. Which means that I can run a Committee in

a manner that produces results without imposing my own views. It's a matter of cutting through the verbiage + middle that is chief product of most committees, finding the consensus + articulating it. The result is that I'm always asked to be on + chair committees, + although I've declared at the beginning of the meeting of the Playwrights Committee that I'll not run for the presidency of the Board again, I am being pressured by several members to let my name stand for re-election. But I intend to stand firm for 3 reasons: (1) I've been on the Board 4 yrs + it's time to make room for other people with new ideas + energies (there are always good people out there whose talents won't develop until the incumbents move on); (2) my health requires that I reduce my commitments, + that means dropping this

kind of organizational involvement; (3) Due definitely doesn't want me to run; my independence + forthrightness is too much for the mediocrities that manipulate the organization - a mafiosa (the Jane Brusses - Erica Ritters - Carol Belts + Ric Salutins of the world that corrode the social + intellectual fibre of any organization or society at any level!) that I'm not prepared to fight unless I have to. I'm no Don Quixote. The best way to relegate them to the adicam is to produce works that celebrate the human spirit, the imagination, the joy + love that they lack! —

After the ~~exam~~ hearing on Sunday I met with Freddy to go to the Puppet Theatre of Ricardo Faral. They wanted to talk to me about Mock, to find out what I wanted to do or say with the play, how I came

to write it, + Freddy had some specific questions concerning a possible translation (one of them that caused Adèle some problems with the French translation, i.e. the gender of the sun + the moon which is so malleably the opposite of what it must be in the play — the next day, Freddy told me his wife Myaca solved the problem at once for him!). The result of our 2 hour session was that the play will be translated by Freddy + that the theatre will produce it, probably early in 1988. They are hoping that I'll come in December to take part in the rehearsals. That suits me fine, since I was planning a Caribbean holiday over Christmas anyway.

Sunday eve at 7 was the official opening of the XXII. ITC World Congress in an old Spanish Colonial Building

at the Plaza de Armas. The moral being
Speeches of a series of official, an experience
~~exacerbated~~ by the heat. But there were two
handsome Royal palm trees in the attractive
patio where the ceremony took place. Afterwards
— after a long + sweaty wait in the
Plaza de la Cathedral — there was a per-
formance of "Los Rumbas" — an exciting
spectacle of folk dancing + singing that
have their roots in Africa. Some of the
dances were immensely energetic, + the
naked sweaty dark-skinned bodies glisten-
ing in the colored stage-lights made
a starry tropical ^{sky} ~~angle~~ ^{sky} conjured up
tribal memories long before the dawn of
historical consciousness.

After "Los Rumbas" I took an IT bus
back to the hotel + was in bed
around midnight.

*

Tuesday noon : I give myself another ten minutes to record a memorable experience last night (as early this morning, to be exact). In the afternoon Ignacio Jiménez took me aside + told me I was invited to a special party + show to celebrate a medal to be given to José SaymRa (another one!). I immediately sensed there was something special about this invitation + decided we were going to see Fidel Castro. The discreet manner + air of the invitation as well as my guess that only Fidel could give José this medal after Havana had given him the Freedom of the City the day before, gave me this idea. Well, at 8³⁰ pm a group of us were picked up in a large bus + taken to the Mella Theatre to see an agitprop piece, called 'De los Días de la Guerra', performed by 'El Teatro Zampi'.

It was a long combination dance + chant that bored me because it was far too long + monotonous — a work based on José Martí's diary, (Cuba's national hero), not the best choice for a theatrical spectacle. Afterwards I was ready to go back to the hotel, especially as I was beginning to develop some animal pain (+ I had left my mito in the hotel for once, because I'd been quite organized about carrying it about with me here in Cuba). There were many delegates from the ITI at the performance, but the manner in which they were admitted confirmed my speculation + I stayed. Soon we were admitted to the bus where our names were checked off against a list. By then I was sure + I was surprised that the other people suspected nothing. We were then taken on a cross-cross trip through H. (like the tail of

a rabbit trying to shake a porcupine dog)
+ ended up at a large building situated
in a large landscaped garden (details were
difficult to establish in the half-dark) —
a Government reception hall where we
were all positioned for the ceremony.
And sure enough, about midnight Fidel
appeared: we stood silent while the Cuban
+ (what I took to be) the Nigerian national
anthems were played, the Minister of Culture
gave a speech, Castro presented Soyinka with
the medal, Soyinka spoke, + then the
whole party broke + milled about, the
focus being naturally Castro. Through-
out the ceremony he seemed ill
at ease + looked in various directions.
He was directly across from me (in line
with Wole who had his back to me
about halfway). He has aged more than
I have in the 20 years since I last saw

him. The face shows the strain of his particular office + responsibility as the incarnation of the hopes of so many people throughout the world. But the eyes are as clear + brilliant as ever, quickly darting between us to separate the wheat from the chaff. If he has gained a little weight + moves more heavily, his liveliness is infectious + his energy ^{seemingly} inexhaustible. He talked with us till 3³⁰ am, by which time some of us were languishing in the large leather upholstery (After some sleep at 2 am) I'd get up before 6 am, spent the morning at the ITI General Assembly where I spoke up once more, prepared the PC meeting while others were having lunch, chaired the meeting from 2 to 6, got back to the hotel in time for a rushed dinner + then was whisked off at 8³⁰ pm).

HAWAII

Feb. 2nd to 15th, 1997

*

Sunday, Feb. 2nd: Clara (+ Sava) came with us to Dorval + then dropped us off to catch our CP flight to Toronto where we were (boarding) our flight to Honolulu at 5:45pm. In the morning I skied in the forest at a "mild" -5°C, hoping that I could say for once in my life that I'd skied in the morning + swim in the ocean in the evening. It almost came true, if you make allowance for the 5-hour time difference between EST + Hawaiian time. We landed in Honolulu at around 7:30pm after a seemingly interminable flight. At least we knew in



very rough conditions (the plane shook, and jolted + bounced so much that Atelli was very sick + vomited!). I slept through most of it + therefore wasn't ready to go to sleep when we had settled in at the Outrigger Village Hotel before midnight. Customs + passport formalities were swift and easy, + we used a shuttle bus service for \$13 round-trip to deposit us right in front of the hotel. The room (at \$80/nts a night) is clean + comfortable, with two double beds, but no ocean view. We're only a hotel + a half away from the famous Waikiki Beach. After having had the worst of the flight, ~~but~~ ^{with me} I walked to the beach. ~~It was~~ ^{was} to see that lit up the breakers as thick lines of white foam. Orion stood clearly on edge in the Southern sky, but the Big Dipper was hidden (behind Diamond Head mountain, I think). So I put my foot in the water to establish the

link to the Canadian Snow we left be
hind in the morning.

Wednesday, Feb. 5, 7am (Honolulu, Outrigger
Village)

Two days have passed + I haven't found time to keep any notes. The first day, Monday, might be called Orientation + Accommodation Day. We spent a good part of the day walking about the Waikiki area. The temperatures were (+ still are) around + 27°C - so our bodies had to adapt to this sudden (e and welcome) arrival of summer time for shorts + short-sleeved shirts + flappies. We had to settle on various reservations, book our flights to Kauai + Maui (at Hawaiian Sale in Hobson Lane), + check out our bookings (hotel / condo) for these islands with an agent in L.A. (by fax + phone). And, of course, we took our first long swim in the ocean. Ah - what a delight for all the senses to be engulfed by the soft + fresh

living Salt Sea! Considering that the place is overwhelmed with tourists, there were remarkably few people swimming in the ocean. Perhaps that's because, despite the great water + the immense sand strand, the ground under water is shallow + littered with broken coral so that one fears ~~it~~ cutting one's knee swimming; one has to go far out to get to deeper water. I'm told it's not like that all along Waikiki, but we won't be here long enough to find the most agreeable places to swim. Because we're moving on today to Kauai. — In the afternoon we took a "trolley" (an open bus to "Aloha Towers", a shopping market in the downtown area. We found it mostly the usual souvenirs + tourist shops, pricey but marginal — + again with remarkably few tourists in evidence. That's been our general impression all over Waikiki: we expected large crowds of tourists, but people seem to scatter so as not to become oppressive. The

laid-back atmosphere that surrounds Waikiki here helps. — At Aloha Towers we walked into a Wyland gallery, + pretending to be collectors, allowed ourselves to be subjected to a fair sales pitch by a fat fish girl (with a "German" name: Shulan Hoffman — ~~the~~ family dropped the "O" because the fish were unpopular at the time) — from the story of Wyland's clubfoot as a child to his ambition to finish 100 murals by the year 2011 (— he's at 68 now) + his mural crusade on behalf of whales. In fact, he seems to paint primarily whales, + though he is technically proficient he has allowed himself to become so commercialized that much of his work doesn't rise above the level of kitsch. An artist who sells out ceases to be an artist. We expressed some interest in a large print of the tail of a whale rising from the ocean on a modular right whale (a little too obviously) to symbolize significance (+ with that absolutely essential honesty of the

artist might have succeeded). At US \$2700.- it wasn't a steal, though most of the value was in the black lacquered frame which the artist (+ the director, Robert) kept on polishing presumably to convey to us their reverence for art (spill: M-O-N-E-Y). When we left "to think it over", we were offered a discount + a private meeting with the artist (at age 40 with still an illustrious commercial career ahead). — The Image Cruises "Oahu" was berthed at Aloha Towers. Impossible! A floating city more than a ship. We were told a passage for a 3-months with two starts at \$150,000 + goes up to \$750,000! Who can afford to spend that kind of money? We live in a world run by crooks!

— In the evening we treated ourselves to a delicious fish meal at Scott's Restaurant at the Aloha Towers. Shared an order of crab cakes for Hors d'oeuvre. A ate + I an exquisitely delicious Ahi fish (at the row) with rice. A had a glass of wine, + I two

bottles of beer. And we shared a dessert: mocha cheese cake (delicious). The bill was unfortunately quite exorbitant too: \$5477.00. With the tip the meal came to \$120.- Canadian — twice what it might have cost back home. — Just heard on the news that the jury in the O.J. Simpson civil suit have found O.J. "responsible" for the murder of which the criminal trial found him "mentally"! What a rare demonstration of the basic injustice in America's justice system! There is absolutely not a shred of doubt in my mind that Simpson committed the murders of which he stands accused. But in the U.S. everything is a function of money, even justice. Simpson was acquitted because he could afford a team of shyster lawyers who were able to exploit the deeply rooted racism in U.S. society. Now he'll pay back a few of the millions of dollars he has made from the publicity he garnered as a result of his murders + the TV trial (a book, endorsements, etc.), + he goes free.

What a mockery of Justice! And always at the expense of ordinary people who are duped into believing they live in a fair, just + free society. I never know what makes me more angry: their self-indulgent gallility or the cynical contumacy + shamelessness of their exploiters! —

*

Friday, Feb. 7

7 am - Funisia

Gates, Kauai

Holidays for us are never times of relaxation as much as opportunities to satisfy our more exotic appetites. We haven't sat still for more than an hour since we got off the CP plane — except when I wait for A. to turn up for breakfast. So I'm far behind events in my notes. When I wrote my notes on Wednesday (is it really only 3 days ago) in Honolulu, I was about to record my impression of our visit the previous day to the Polynesian

Cultural Centre when A. came down for the "Oink 'n Easy" breakfast (2 strips of bacon, Scrambled eggs, toast + jam at \$2.49). That ended my note-taking for that day. And since then we've been on the move. Back to Tuesday, Feb. 4 + our visit to the Polynesian Centre.

We were to be picked up at the Sheraton bus terminal at 11:30 am. There was a mob of people, different tours leaving from the same place at the same time, + much confusion. A poorly organized affair. Although I consulted the head honchos — a woman dressed in a long white dress with green flowers (a type of Mother Hubbard encasing the missionaries with their perverse anti-sexual obsessions foisted on the natives — several times to determine which group we belonged to in the end we were the only couple left behind + a minibus had to be summoned to catch up with one of the tour buses,

(#509, driven by a jolly dark-skinned fellow who called himself Cousin Kong). After a short stop for souvenirs + a snack (an opportunity especially welcome by the Japanese whose main concern as tourists everywhere seems to be to go shopping + to take pictures of themselves), we arrived at the Center a little after 1:30 pm. The Center is dedicated to the preservation of the native cultures of the Polynesian islands + is operated by the Mormon Brigham Young University — ironically, because it was the Christian missionaries that have seen to it that nothing has remained of the native cultures of these islands — except a tepid lmla-lmla tourist attraction. It was inevitable that the priests + ministers of a lacrymose + whining, breast-beating, world-negative religion such as Christianity should do everything in its power to stamp out a culture devoted to the celebration of beauty, nature + joy!



Their pleading poverty to the natives has not prevented them from acquiring the land. 80% of Kauai (where I am writing this), for instance, is owned by twelve

rich families, all descendants of missionaries? If the missionaries have not entirely succeeded in eradicate the joy of life here, it is because they were defeated by the relentless joy of nature.

— the incredible beauty of the volcanic mountains, the lush vegetation with its glittering + whispering palm trees, the multitude of bushes + trees flowering in all colors, the mild climate always between 22° + 30° C is + the ocean everywhere, teeming with dolphin, sharks, turtles + myriads of colorful tropical fish. Something of the spirit of that benign + joyous nature is still palpable in some of the customs + dances we witnessed at the Polynesian Center, commercialized as it is. —

The center consists of acres of an elaborately landscaped garden with canals dividing them into six ^{tiny} islands whose six South Pacific islands display some of their traditional crafts + skills, community buildings + dresses: Hawaii, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Tahiti, + Aotearoa (New Zealand). It was all very colorful + friendly as we moved from one culture to another, following various performances

that included a well tattooed Samoan chief who made + played with fire; a splendid pageant on various rafts acting out some ancient legend involving the fire goddess Pele; complex drum rhythms played by Fijians, etc. I thought I detected some interesting differences between the islands (a more gentle air among the Tahitians as compared to the Fijians) but it was all too brief + tailored for tourist consumption to draw any, even tentative conclusion. One became aware that among these happy people warfare + kidnaps were not unknown (Among the Fijians if you entered the chief's abode by the wrong door you were immediately clubbed to death, no questions asked!) either. And there was always the threat of volcanic eruptions + hurricanes that would from time to time wreak havoc among the islanders. Yet the overall impression of these cultures is one of a profound + serene spirituality, though I suspect their darker sides have been laundered out by obtuse + greedy promoters. These impressions were confirmed by a spectacular theatrical presentation at 8 pm in a large amphitheater that must seat

between 2 + 3,000 people. All the islands participated, each giving exciting performances of group dances that included "A' Ali'i No 'Oe", danced with split Bamboo (pu ili) by men + women to tell how men enjoy being treated like kings (Hawaii); "Ngaalii Ongi 'Oe Nafaa" an acrobatic performance on drums (Tonga); "Titi Tora", a stick dance in Volving very quick reflexes to teach us of life's constant surprises (New Zealand); "Rauda", a fan dance expressing gratitude for the beauty of the land (Fiji); "Oea Amua", a joyous wedding celebration (Tahiti); "Fa'ataupati", an energetic + rhythmic slap dance by young men (Samoa); and at least a dozen more, ending in a rousing display of fire + water (fountains) to round out a rich afternoon + evening. — But between the Spectacle ("Horizon") + the afternoon events, we had dinner — a "luau", a special native feast with various ceremonial introductions in colorful costumes, including the removal from an "oven" (actually a 2 ft deep, 4 ft square pit) of two pigs cooked on fire-heated lava stones (which retain heat for 12 hours + more) under layers of banana leaves. There was

fruit juice (no alcohol! Probably because it's all organized by Mormons), salads, sweet potatoes, chicken, fish, + of course the cooked pig (shoved). It wasn't a gourmet meal, but there was lots of it (buffet-style) + it was made more enjoyable by songs + dances performed on stage in the large open hall where about 500 of us ate. The dinner started at 5:30pm. At 7pm, we left to see the Imax film: "The Living Sea". Marvelous photography, stunning views both of + in the sea, but the film remains too fragmentary. In a way, its makers were defeated by the immensity of the oceans, really a single body of water so vast that I came away with the conviction that ignorantly we continue to contaminate this planet, the sea will not succumb + will regenerate itself after we have done.

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\$13.00 ROUNDTRIP
566-7333
383783

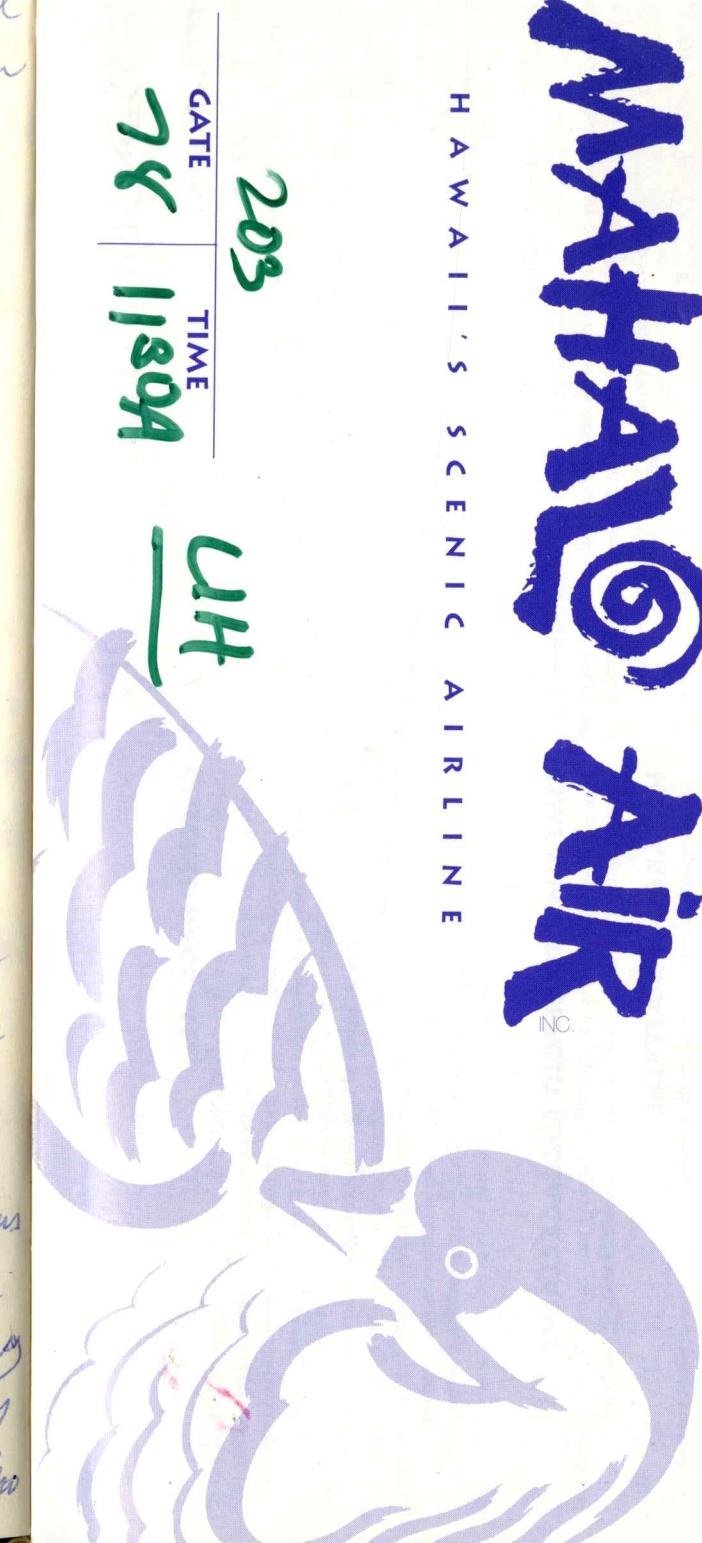
*
The next day, Feb. 5, we took the Airport Waikiki Express to catch our flight with Mahalo ('Thank-you') Airlines at 11:45 am + we flew over that vast blue

ocean to Kauai — perhaps the most beautiful + the least tourist-ridden of the islands. —



Tuesday, Feb. 11 / 8am / Island Valley Resort / Maui

Yesterday we transferred from Kauai here to Maui. It took the last part of the day. We took a walk to the Spouting Horn before we left, but the rest of the morning was taken up packing. I returned the car + driver at the Kihuna Airport at 11:45 am — with some delay because they proposed to charge \$2.69 a gallon to refill the tank + I drove back 3 miles to Kihuna where I refilled it at \$1.59 a gallon! (Marvellous as these islands are, all interaction with visitors is commercialized, + those living off them will use any deception or chicanery to get an extra buck!). At 12:30 pm we flew



here we changed views were lots of clouds + made flying a crowded whale up over Axis clock between mystic convert over economy in style — an would make y. There were for the centre e reached the sky + the eve. We im- scenes between more of a gentle land- to our studio

ocean to Kauai



Tuesday, Feb. 11

Yesterday
arrived to Man
the day. He +
Horn before +
morning. We
turned the
whole day
delay began
at 2.69 a gal
drove back.
refilled it + a
as these isla
visitors is
off them will
to get an ext.

PASSENGER INFORMATION

RESERVATIONS

Oahu: (808) 833-5555

Neighbor Islands: 1-8

U.S. Mainland & Car

Tokyo, Japan: 03-3597

Photo identification is required.

denied and the ticket/coupon

on the ticket/coupon. Note: F
subject to inspection including

CHECK-IN & BOARDING TIMES

Passengers are required to check in at the Mahalo ticket counter no later than **30 minutes** prior to scheduled departure time. Reservations are subject to cancellation and passengers are not eligible for denied boarding compensation if they present themselves at the boarding gate less than **10 minutes** before scheduled departure.

CARRY-ON BAGGAGE

One carry-on piece per passenger is permitted if it weighs no more than 5 lbs, and will fit in an area $18'' \times 11'' \times 8''$. Items such as medicines, keys, important papers and travel documents should be carried on board. Mahalo Air reserves the right to restrict carry-on luggage.

11

punctures or marks.

TIME LIMIT TO REPORT LUGGAGE CLAIMS

All lost, damaged, delayed or missing luggage/property must be reported to Mahalo Air within 24 hours of occurrence. Failure to do so may result in denial of your claim.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL

Federal regulations restrict carriage on the aircraft of items classified as hazardous materials. These materials include, but are not limited to, flammable gases, liquids and solids, non-flammable compressed gas, explosives, poisons, corrosives, oxidizing materials, radioactive materials and magnetic materials.

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Outside identification is required on all checked baggage. It is recommended that you also place your name and address inside your luggage as well. All checked luggage should be locked. Liability for checked baggage is limited to \$1.250 per passenger and excludes certain items. Do not place money, jewelry, electronic or camera equipment, or other expensive or non-replaceable items in checked baggage. Federal regulations require that firearms in checked luggage must be declared and unloaded. Free baggage allowance includes two bags per passenger not over 44 lbs. each and not exceeding 62" (L+W+H). Maximum weight per checked bag is 70 lbs. with maximum dimensions not exceeding 80". Excess charges are collected for additional/oversized /overweight pieces. Note: Surfboards in excess of 6'6" cannot be accepted. Mahalo shall not be liable for damage arising from normal wear and tear of baggage handling, including but not restricted to scratches, scuff, punctures or marks.

MISSING LUGGAGE CLAIMS

within 24 hours of occurrence. Failure to do so may result in denial of your claim.

Federal regulations restrict carriage on the *Mississippi*.

These materials include, but are not limited to, flammable gases, liquids and solids, non-flammable compressed gas, explosives, poisons, corrosives, oxidizing materials, radioactive materials and magnetic materials.

with Malnalo to Honolulu where we changed to another flight (#414) at 2 pm which took us to Maui in 20 mins: twin prop on high wings. The views were spectacular, though there were lots of clouds + a fair bit of wind which made flying a little rocky at times. But we arrived whole + healthy. When I picked up an Avis car, I must've charmed the clerk because she offered me an Chrysler convertible for the same price as an Economy car + so we drove off in style - an open red convertible that would make Clara Peller proud with envy. There were heavy cloud formations over the centre of the island, but when we reached the west coast (on Hwy #30) the sky + the ocean were as blue as ever. We immediately noticed some differences between K. + M. - more traffic, more of a resort feeling, + calmer seas + gentler landscapes. We picked up the Key to our studio

in Lahaina (after having done some shopping for food at Safeway's in Kailua - prices in restaurants are so horrendous that I'd bankrupt us if we went eating out all the time. We rented a condo in Kailua here in Maui so that we could prepare some simple meals for ourselves) + drove straight to Kahana. By 5³⁰ pm, as the light was beginning to fade, we were installed in our new quarters - a room with a fantastic view Room # 707 with only Sand Beach, palm trees, the ocean + in the distance the island of Noho-Kai! The facilities (despite the higher price at \$110 per night) are less generous than in our condo (#105) in Kailua Shores, but we're on vacation + we have all we need. - It's time now to turn back + try to catch up on my notes about our stay in Kauai.

And so back to Wednesday, Feb. 5 - the day we flew at 2³⁰ pm via Mahalo Air to Kauai. A smooth flight with splendid views, some of which I photographed. There was some confusion when we arrived

because "the white envelope" that was supposed to be waiting for us at Avis wasn't there. So we drove to "Kailua Shores", found the janitor who, in turn, called the Real Estate Co. where someone authorized him to let us into our condo where the key + everything else was waiting for us. We occupied condo #105 with ocean view, a 1 bedroom apartment with an extremely well appointed kitchen, large sitting room + balcony right by the side of a lovely lava-worned bay where green turtles come joy-riding the waves every morning. There were a few houses on the promontory across from us, but we never saw anyone (except our neighbors occasionally). It was like having a private beach because there was enough of a strip of sand for us to sit + swim. After unpacking + settling in around 4 pm, we drove up to Spouting Horn where a guy (local) called Daryl gave us some tips about what to see + where to eat reasonably. We watch the water spout from a crack of lava, forced by the surf

through channels in the porous lava. It appears that a century ago the spent was more massive + the resulting sea water spray damaged the nearby sugar cane. So the Chinese workers were ordered to blow it up (according to Dayle, a couple of Chinese were killed in the event), + to-day's "Spouting lava" - essentially a single eruption of sea water following a strong enough wave - is all that is left. We relaxed for the evening + turned in at around 10pm.

*

Wednesday, Feb. 12 - Game - Valley Isle Rest

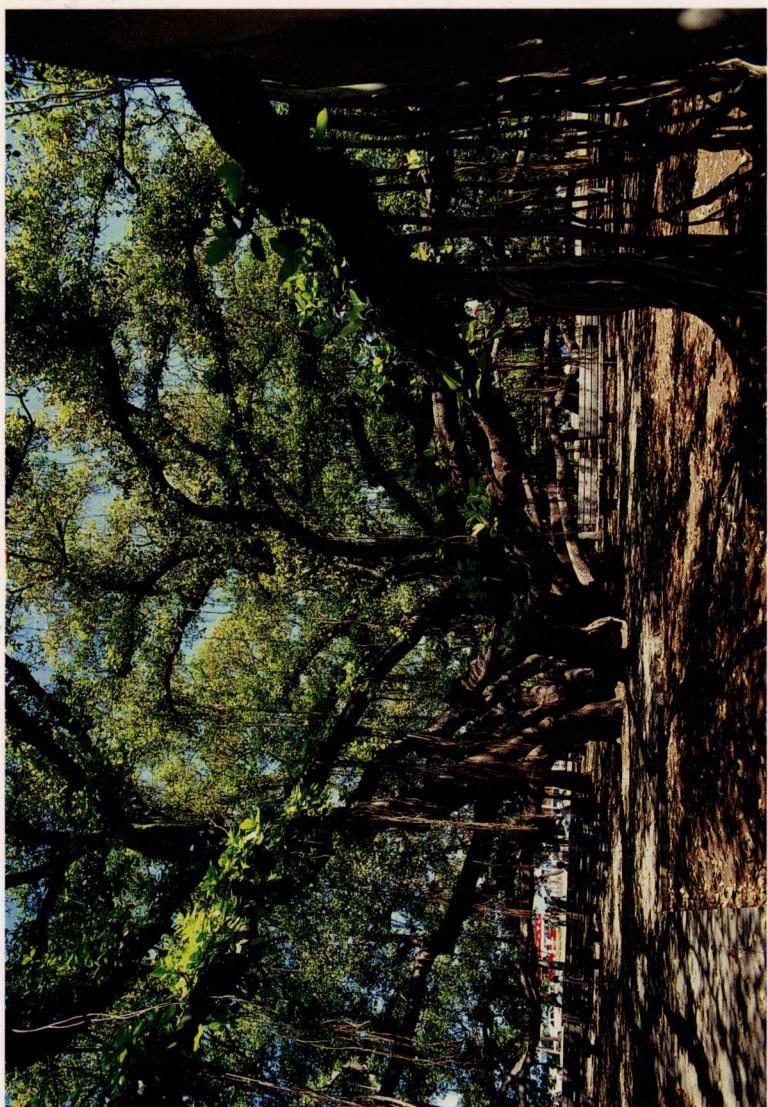
Yesterday, around 10am, we set out to drive around the northern shore of Maui. Our first stop was at Kapalua Beach, supposedly "the most beautiful beach in the N.S." Well, it's picture-postcard pretty, but not any more than dozens of beaches we've seen on Hawaii - + it has nothing on P. Beach on Kauai. We swam at Kapalua, thoroughly enjoying the fresh, silky water +

the buoyant waves. We continued on an increasingly winding road, stopping from time to time to admire (or photograph) some breathtaking vistas, or to watch (near Honokalan) scores of surfers riding the waves - a marvellous sport that I'd take up were I a couple of decades younger - sharing such intimacy with the sea, becoming part of the force that moves it ceaselessly, what a spiritual thrill. Perhaps the whale experience something of this: as I'm writing this in the galleries of an Indo, I can see several groups of whales blowing ("That's she blows!") + breaching! The sea is calm this morning + we're seeing a lot more whales than we've ever seen before. One gets a sense that they're playing in the water, enjoying the feel + the movement, their intimacy with the ocean - having a whale of a time! — The landscape of this island seems to be very diverse. We passed through fields of pineapple plantations, tropical forests, + rocky areas with sparse vegetation so that I was reminded of Newfoundland or Scotland - but

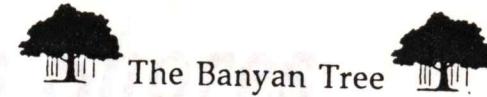
for the temperatures. The road ceased to be a State Highway just past Haukakau & became a narrow, often single-lane road that was quite hazardous & often created situations in which we (or those meeting us from the opposite direction) had to back up to find a widening in the road so that we could pass. We stopped to drink fresh coconut milk (+ take the nut home to eat - \$3) & to buy a deliciously sweet pineapple (\$5) - large & juicy (we just ate $\frac{1}{4}$ of it for breakfast). The road was not only narrow but also extremely curvy so that our progress was slow, especially as we stopped frequently. It clouded over in the Kaliakuloa area where we stopped at the Sunlit's Tropical Garden & saw an exotic & magnificent blue flower for the first time: "a jade plant" - a rare plant indeed, which I think I saw in Singapore. - When we reached Hwy 30 to town South we found it blocked by police because of an accident. We were

re-routed to Hwy 380, only to find it blocked by police because of an accident (in fact the cruisers we took on, blue lights flashing & sirens wailing, to direct the traffic). The result was a slow, often a bumper-to-bumper crawl, home through lots of traffic. We stopped in Lahaina, drove along Front Street past all the little stores, & paid a visit to the world's largest Banyan tree, a truly magnificent specimen (quite different from the one we saw & I photographed in Santa Barbara, which was a single, mammoth trunk with branches spreading to create a large umbrella of foliage) which in a mere 150 years had spread to take up the whole Town Square; its branches have grown into thick trunks at distances of about 20-40 ft from the main trunk wherever they touched ground - a unique family of trees. - We got back home at about 5:30 pm. I called Clara to give her our number here & to wish her well for her trip to Calgary on Thursday. But it's painful

to think of our Canadian winter in this
paradisaical West! —



The Banyan Tree at Lahaina



Shading more than two thirds of an acre, measuring nearly one-fourth of a mile in circumference and reaching upward to a height of 60 ft., the Banyan Tree (*ficus benghalensis*) has been a Lahaina landmark for more than 12 decades. The tree has spread over the area via aerial roots which, when they reach the ground, grow into thick trunks. The Lahaina Banyan Tree is the largest in the state of Hawaii.

The Banyan Tree was planted on April 24, 1873 by William Owen Smith, Sheriff of Lahaina to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Lahaina's first Protestant Christian Mission at Lahaina which was started at the request of Queen Keopuolani, the Queen Mother and sacred wife and widow of King Kamehameha the Great. The banyan tree is a member of the fig family and originally came from India.

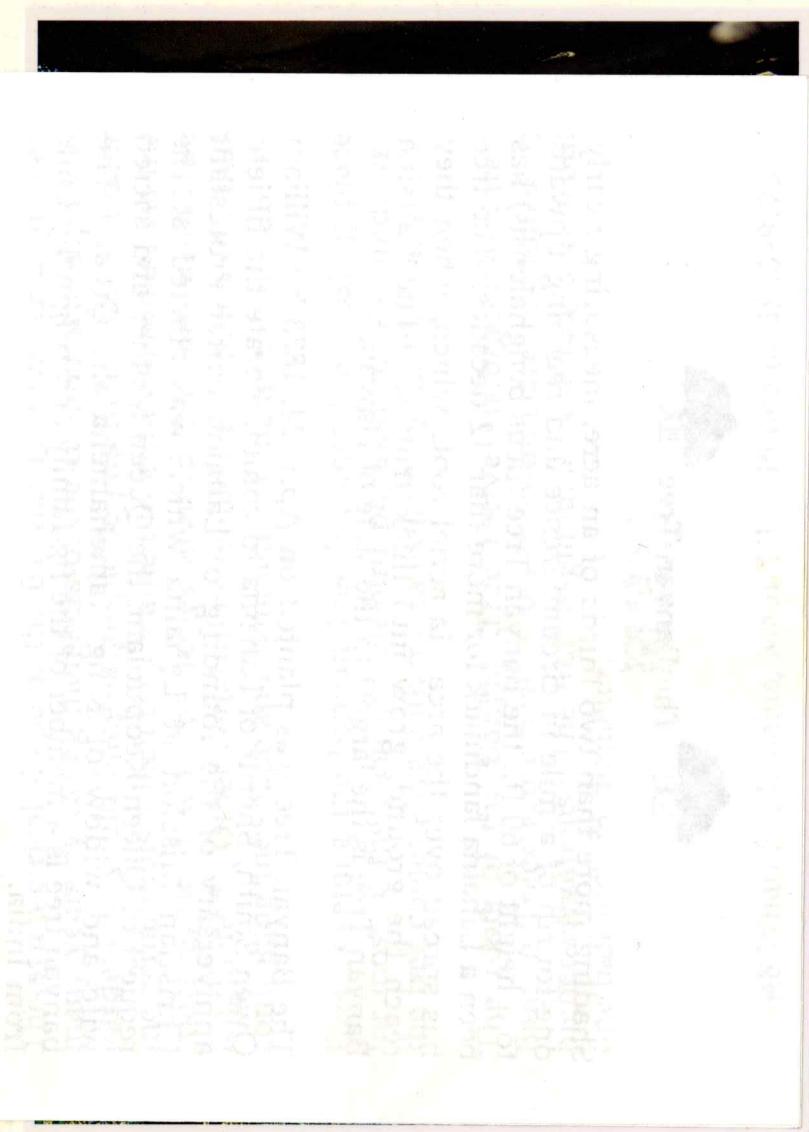
The symmetrical shape of the Banyan Tree was created over many years by caring members of the community. Japanese gardeners would hang large pickle jars full of water under the aerial roots which they wanted to grow as trunks. As the roots grew down, the ropes around the jars would be lengthened. Other aerial roots would be trimmed off, thus controlling the shape and symmetry of the tree.

Every evening the Banyan Tree becomes the roosting place for most of the local mynah bird population. At sundown, the tree comes alive with the raucous tunes of these birds.

The roots of the Banyan Tree thrive on brackish water. Banyan Trees grow best at sea level and are not found at higher elevations. The fruit is globular, rose red, and about one-half inch in diameter.



to think of our Canadian winter in this
paradisiacal world! —



The Banyan Tree at Waimea

Kuhio Shores

PARKING PASS

Room
Number

339

On our 2nd day on Kauai we decided to drive up the Waimea Canyon. We figured it'd be a trip of a couple of hours since it was only 17 miles to Waimea + another 17 miles from there to the top of the canyon. It soon became apparent that it'd take a lot longer. To start with, there were so many splendid beaches on the way to Waimea that we stopped several times + had a swim on several near Pakila Village. Then there were speed limits, usually at 25 mph, and, finally, the actual canyon road was full of twists + turns. But it was an exciting 2 because it was Mark Twain who called

And now back to Kuhio where are parking permit No was exactly the same as our postal box No back home Thursday, Feb. 6 977

Waimea Canyon the "Grand Canyon of Hawaïi", and indeed there are places where it resembles the actual Grand Canyon in Arizona. But the comparison doesn't do Waimea justice because it is less majestic, neither as deep nor as extensive as the G.C., + it is a geological infant. The Hawaiian islands were formed by volcanic action from the sea floor about 6½ million years ago + took another 5 million years to reach its present shape (although the volcano on Hawaïi itself still adds land to the island by repeated eruptions + a constant lava flow). The Waimea, unlike the G.C., is not an open book of the evolution of life; there are no fossils in these islands. But the Waimea Canyons have their own characteristics: if occasionally the rains have washed parts of the slopes clear of vegetation + exposed the red earth (iron oxidation?) in layers reminiscent of the G.C., most of the rifts are filled with tropical grass, bushes + trees, + exude an air of mystery & quiet magnificence. They often developed into valleys

running straight into the sea + offer breath-taking vistas 4,000 ft down a green valley into the blue sea separated from the land by the white foam of a vigorous surf — such as we saw (+ I photographed) from Kalalau lookout. The western-most point of the Canyon road that offers a glimpse of the falconous Na Pali coast, inaccessible by any other route (except for a hiker's ~~trail~~ from Kī'e Beach) but by sea. The vistas on the road are too many to list, but Puna Ka Pali lookout is memorable for the most Grand-Canyon-like view it provides. We spent most of 6 hours on the Canyon trip + then descended to the coast to drive to the western-most point. At Mana (near a US submarine missile site) the highway ends + we drove another 7 or 8 miles on an awful dirt road full of potholes, but it was worth it because we came to the most magnificent beach we have ever seen: Polihale Beach — large sand dunes in both directions, high waves breaking them-

dangerously, + no one else in sight! We stayed there for an hour, but needed the sign that warned against swimming because of dangerous surf, currents + a deadly undertow. A little was ecstatic about Polihale; it has become a beach mask for his which no other beach so far has been able to even approximate.

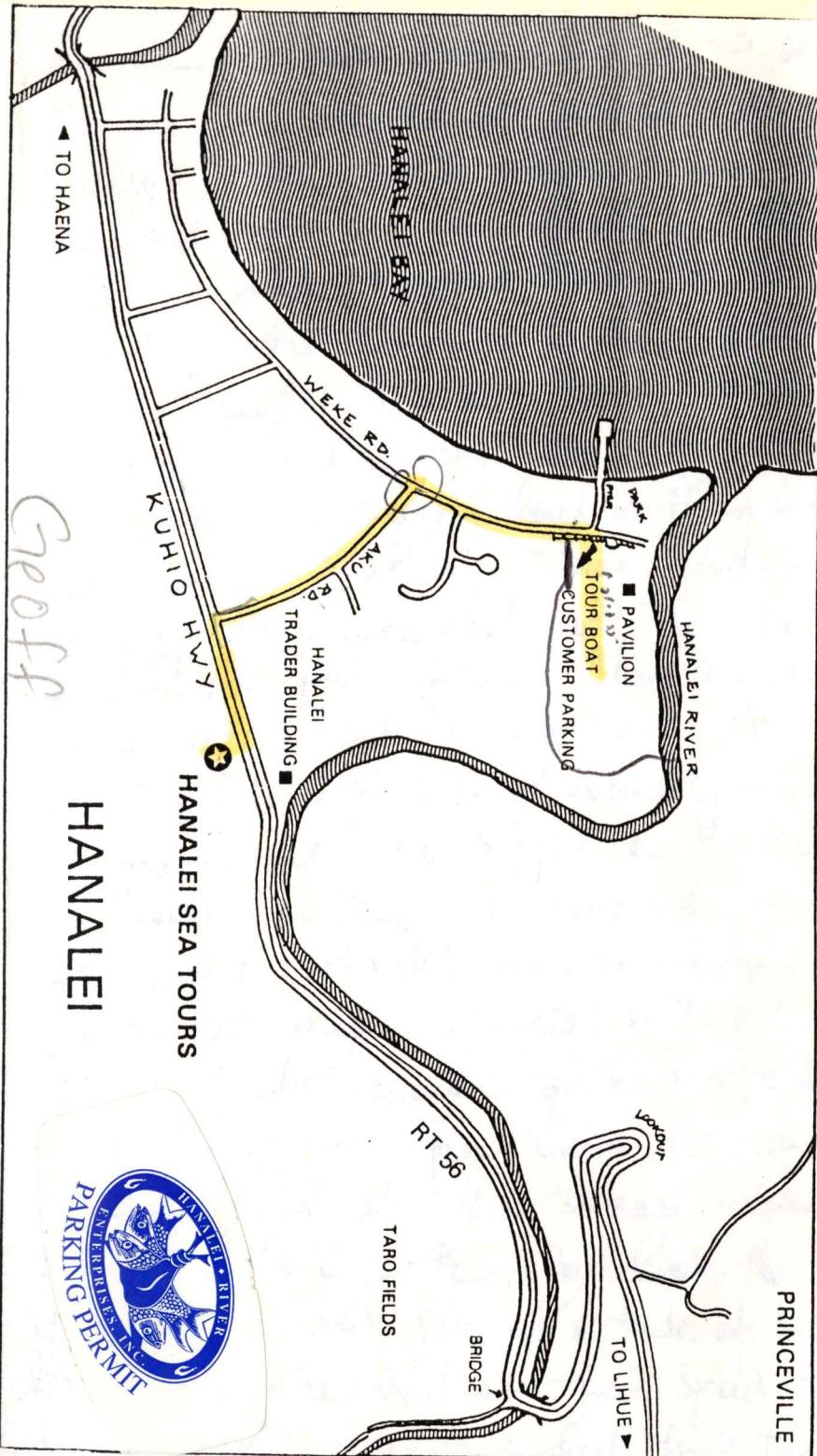
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Today, Feb. 14 - Valentine's Day - 8:30 am - Maui

With an "Aloha an ia oe" ("I love you" in Hawaiian) we began the day & gave A. a four jumpsuit + A. took on a blue silk summer shirt to celebrate the day + as a souvenir of our Hawaiian adventures which come to an end tomorrow. We also decided against another outing - a drive to the Hanakaihi Volcano crater, because it is almost certainly shrouded in clouds + rain, because we're exhausted from yesterday's trip to Hana, + because we thought we'd spend at least one day just relaxing, swimming, reading. Of course

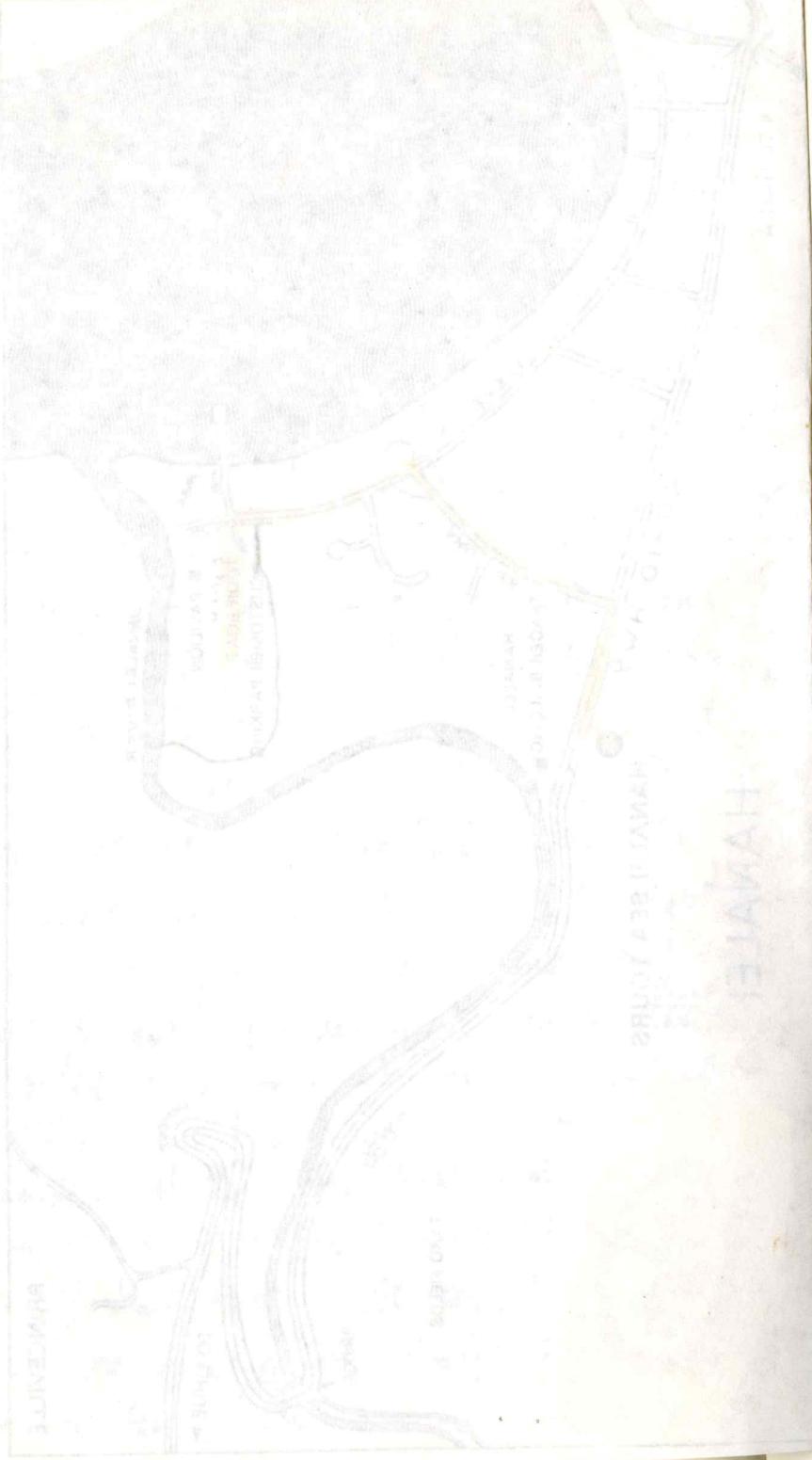
I'm still catching up with my notes on Kauai - so that's what I'm doing now, sitting on the balcony looking out on a calm sea where once again school groups of whales (it's impossible to tell at this distance whether there are two, three or more) are cavorting: I see fins flashing, tails splashing, occasional breaching + much blowing. - Kauai, Feb. 7: for our second day we booked a 4 hour raft ride with "Hanaelei Sea Tours". We got out around 9 am so that we could stop along the way which would take us north along the east coast + then from Kilauea west to the extreme western point accessible by road. The drive was not very inspiring till we got past Kapaa, an ugly strip of shopping marts, at least along Hwy #56. We enjoyed a number of scenic vistas + at Kilauea turned off to visit the light-house which is across from an exciting bird sanctuary on a steep rocky slope. A nicely landscaped area with excellent views of the sea.

From there we drove west, but saw very little of the sea because much of the road is bordered by private property, many of them with somewhat ramshackle buildings, wooden structures, square & functional only. When we reached Haena State Park, we found ourselves suddenly in a luxuriant rain forest. We stopped at Kie Beach, an attractive but rocky cove, that is the end of the line for cars. From there a hiking trail of 12 miles leads southward along the coast towards the Na Pali Cliffs. — One of the most fabulous sights on these islands, as we were soon to find out. A sprinkling of rain got us going back to Hanalei where, in any case, we were expected to report at 7 pm for our cruise. And we did indeed go out to sea in a rubber ^{driven} raft, with two outboard motors — not the most comfortable way to travel since there was only small bench at the back that seated two (or three at a pinch). A little ^{and} another woman; the rest of us half stood, half leaned against the rubber tube sides of the craft. But all the sights we saw!! The Na Pali Cliffs are



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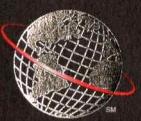
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stunning! Sheer green cliffs 2-3,000 ft into the sea, interrupted at intervals by deep valleys, often with high waterfalls, at the end of one of which (Kalalau hook-out) we had looked down to the sea, not knowing that the view in the opposite direction would be even more breathtaking. The only cloud in the blue sky of course was indeed a large cloud drifting overhead with us & making some shots impossible because the movement of the boat called for a higher speed exposure than my 100 ASA film would allow. But, in any case, the images of the Na Pali cliffs are permanently engraved in my mind. We stopped on the way back in Lumahai Bay to snorkel, & I was both moved & excited by the many colorful fish in all shapes & sizes, with extraordinary designs, that seemed quite untroubled by my presence & often came up close to get a better look at this strange & clumsy creature. Also on the way back the Captain of the boat (Steve) gave us a taste of surfing by running the boat at great speed directly into 4 ft waves - a great thrill that got

our adrenalin pumping + made this the most exciting experience for Adelle who dream it is to ride the surf (as we witnessed at Nipua point the day before yesterday). It was dark when we returned to house where A. prepared a quick spaghetti meal. By 9:30 pm we were asleep + didn't get up till 6 am. = ~~Saturday at Feb. 8~~

bit of a waste of time. A travel agent in Hawaii (not far from our Kuhio



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Shores Condo) had suggested we enjoy a free breakfast at theawai Beach Resort in exchange for listening to a True Sharing Vacations presentations. No pressure, no need to purchase — and we were to get a \$75. reduction on a helicopter ride. Since A. wanted to treat me to a helicopter ride anyway, we were curious to



Lawai Beach Resort - Aloha Guarantee

Your ninety minute tour of our resort will be a no obligation, pleasant experience that you will enjoy!

You will be treated with the utmost respect at all times.

You will receive the gift you selected whether or not you purchase atawai Beach Resort.

You will have an enjoyable, informative tour of Vacation Ownership atawai Beach Resort, with no high pressure sales tactics.

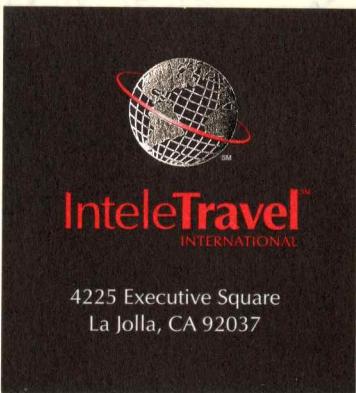
8:00AM & 10:00AM presentations will include tropical juices and gourmet island coffee accompanied by a muffin and a fruit plate.

12:00 presentation will include a fresh club-style sandwich, island salad, gourmet coffee and tropical juices.



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“THIS IS A TIME SHARING SALES PRESENTATION. ANY PURCHASER HAS, UNDER THE LAW, A SEVEN-DAY RIGHT OF RESCISSON OF ANY TIME SHARING SALES CONTRACT.”



hear about Time Sharing here after a near
disaster with such a plan in comment about
20 years ago (the promoters vanished with
the money of those who were gullible enough
to invest; we were not - despite some
very unpleasant high pressure). Well, we
were not high-pressured at Kanai, +
there was no unpleasantness. But we were
medium-pressured + we were tempted: for
about \$16,000 "ownership" (with deed), not
rental, of a (fairly luxurious) 1-bedroom
apartment (well appointed) for one week a
year (with an additional "free" week when
+ where available) + exchangeable with
3,000 such Condo resorts around the world
as part of a 2-million membership organiz-
ation called ~~Walters~~ Resort C. I
We wavered + were offered additional in-
centives, but in the end we turned poor
Jo Anna down. She's been so nice about it all
+ showed us around. We decided we just
didn't want to have other people decide where
we were going to stay - and we were also
suspicious of the ms \$460 (plus booking

fees) annual upkeep payments which in fact amounts to more than we normally pay for a week's accommodation when travelling (without a Can. \$20,000 investment). But we were at the Hanai Resort till close to 2pm differing, + decided it'd not been a prudent way to spend our vacation time. We went for a swim in the afternoon + relaxed by the beach.

— Next day, Sunday, Feb. 9 - as last day, was our helicopter day. We had booked with Kamai Air for 12³⁰ pm. A group of giant turtles moved into our bay in the morning + seemed to frolic in the surf much as we did. We had a swim too before setting out for Hulme Airport. Our pilot was a tall, rather stiff + pedantic character called Warren. There were 6 passengers + he had already assigned the seating on a piece of paper, based on our weight. That was disappointing because I'd got to the fate first in hopes of sitting in the front, but A. + I were assigned seats 4 + 3 respectively, which meant that

got to sit by a window at least, along with the other two passengers. He placed earplugs over our heads which reduced the sound of the engines to a soft hum + through which the pilot talked to us as piped soft but dolorous music (How I would've loved some Bach or Beethoven instead!). The flight took us all around the island + to the side of the 5,000 ft Mount Waialeale, with over 400 inches of rain the wettest spot on earth! We flew into narrow canyons to observe a number of waterfalls + up some skinny river valleys, along the sides of the Na Pali Cliffs. These were gorgeous vistas + unforgettable views, + I tried to take some pictures, though the curved plastic windows + the inside reflections on them make me wonder what will come of them. To my surprise I found the hour-long flight surprisingly exciting: one felt absolutely safe, like sitting in a soft armchair + gliding smoothly across clouds. But I was waster the NSF 200 it cost A. (who treated me to this dream fulfillment)

because of the stunning views we couldn't have enjoyed any other way. — In return I treated A. to a splendid dinner at Jaysoods in K (just outside Hilo). We had to book early to be able to get seated + had a lovely table to ourselves in a garden setting that reminded us of English Country inns. We started with a Hawaiian punch that was the most delicious punch we've ever downed. It had alcohol in punch as well + raised our already heightened spirits further. We then shared an hors d'oeuvre of fresh shrimp (I ate most of them because A. is not supposed to eat them) that were delectable. We decided to have some dry white wine (from California: "Hegre", excellent) with our fish entrees: Mahi Mahi (with an exquisite pineapple-mango salsa) for me + Alii for A — both were most enjoyable dishes (though we agreed that Alii is the better fish: I had it in Honolulu!). We completed the meal with a scrumptious banana-pudding pie for A. +

a mixed pie for me (A's was better). We had a coupon for one free entree, but the bill still came to \$19.00. Hilo is not cheap here, especially us Canadians with a dollar worth less than 75cts in the US. But we thought it was money well spent for a most delicious + satisfying meal + evening to round off our visit to Kauai, definitely our favorite Hawaiian island (of the 3 we know).

In the meantime, we're been out swimming + relaxing on a couple of nearby beaches + the one outside our studio 707. I left my watch behind + that suggested to me: "A happy man does not consult his watch." But I'll consult the calendar. I've finished my Kauai notes now + it's time to move on to Maui + our activities on Wednesday + Thursday, Feb. 12 + 13. Well, we decided to go whale-watching on Wednesday at 11 am. We opted for the "America II" because it was/is a sailing boat. There were only 7 of us on the boat: a family of 5 Argentinians (from Buenos Aires): a father, his 2 daughters +

their soon-to-be husbands, the father an engineer, the rest of them students, one of the daughters in engineering too, the other in psychology) + us. The Captain + his mate said they'd never seen such calm seas in winter before, + the ocean was indeed placid. Apparently the Whales prefer more agitated waters, but we saw several groups of Whales breaching + playing quite close up + a powerful, moving experience that reminded me of seeing the first time lions in the wild (in Kenya): it brought tears to my eyes. The Whales didn't make quite the same impression because we didn't come any closer than about a hundred yards (I was only 20 ft away from the lions!), because Hawaiian law, we were told, forbids boats to go any closer. The "America II" is, of course, also motorized + we moved by the propellers until we came close to the island of Maui, at which point the wind picked up + we hoisted the sails. How marvelous to move across the water by the natural force that moves the water too. It was

a great adventure that lasted a couple of hours + was well worth the \$50. we paid (24.95 each). I was especially affected by the Whales to whom I feel a mysterious attraction. They seem to be gentle + intelligent creatures. The Captain of the "America II" told us that there are about 1200 whales between these islands + they are now raising their young, teaching them their life skills. That's what we were watching. Amazing with what grace these large lumbering animals move in the ocean. I've always been fascinated to know by what twist of fate + environment they were induced to return to the sea. I've got to see a convincing scientific account of their odyssey! — When we returned a little after 1 pm, we walked along Front Street + browsed in the little stores. Most of what they sell is Rish + even in ABC + E-Z stores expensive — garish Hawaiian shirts, "cheap" jewelry, + other big-a-base. We worked the car + parked in the "Liberty" stores complex, + there

found a few blue jumpsuit which I got for A.,
+ she found a blue silk shirt for me. We'd
already bought some T-shirts for the girls at
"Crazy Shirts" in Honolulu. Apart from that
we shopped only for food - after we decided
that eating out was simply too expensive +
not worth it. I prepared a healthy breakfast
with scrambled eggs + pineapple; we skip
lunch; + A. prepares a simply yummy meal,
usually some delicious fish + a pasta dish.
That lunch was fine → Honolulu Airport

→ Thursday, Feb. 13, we drove to Hana, a place recommended
because it was supposed to be
unchanged from the time it was
built, + A. was very keen on
seeing it. The drive was slow
on a narrow, winding road. There
were few vistas of the ocean,
but we passed through some
marvellous rain forest + past
numerous waterfalls. Unfortunately
the sky was overcast + we
passed through a number of rain
showers. There must be lots of
rain along that northeast coast.

Saturday, Feb. 15 -
12 noon: We're on
our way home
on CP flight 126,
leaving at 2:45 pm.
Condon + I got a bike
connection + have
to spend 3 hours
washing her. A.
is off to look at
the stores. I'm in
the little Chinese
garden, catching
up with my
notes. →

* to account for the lushious forest with lots of
tall eucalyptus, Kona + Rankin trees as well as
some large, impressive mango trees. The forest
was the most impressive part of the trip, for
Hana itself was not very interesting - consisting
largely of square wooden buildings but with
splendid flowered gardens. A couple of quaint
churches (RC/St. Mary's + Lutheran?) also seem
to remind me of the destination Christianity brought
upon these, as upon so many other people in the
world. In its missionary activity alone Christianity
has been a terrible plague on mankind. —

We swam in Hana Bay, though I must say
we never found a really good swimming beach
anywhere in the Hawaiian islands. Oh, you
can swim everywhere — but it goes on not
because of shorebreak waves, lots of coral +
rocky bottom, + rip-currents + undertows. A. stayed
close to the beach most of the time as a result,
+ even then she took a couple of nasty tumbles.)
Usually swim just far away from shore + enjoyed
the vibrant + unpredictable waves. Well, this was
one of our happiest holidays (we've had many) +
so Aloha + Mahalo, Hawaii! → *

